

Cthulhu

An alien being, said to be the priest of the Great Old Ones [*HPL Call* 139].

Cthulhu preserved the Great Old Ones with spells, so they can survive until the stars are "right" again [140].

Cthulhu is of vaguely anthropoid outline, with a scaly, rubbery-looking, green, sticky, bloated body. The head is octopus-like, the face covered with tentacles or feelers. There are prodigious claws on the hind and fore feet. Two long, thin, rudimentary wings rise behind [127, 134, 152]. In a dream, Cthulhu appeared to be "miles high" [130] and was later compared to a "mountain" in size [152]. It is not clear whether Cthulhu resembles the other Great Old Ones, for "none might say whether the others were precisely like him" [139].

Deathless Chinamen and Naked Savages

The Great Old Ones have the ability to communicate telepathically with humans, and in ancient times inspired a cult of human worshippers by revealing the location of various small carved idols that had been brought from the stars [139-140]. But this communication ended when R'lyeh sank beneath the ocean, for thought cannot pass through the deep waters [141]. The cult exists hidden in distant wastes and dark places all over the world [139]. The cult has been observed among a singular tribe of Esquimaux on the West Greenland coast [135] as well as among a mob of mix-blooded West Indians, mulattos and negros in a swamp south of New Orleans [139]. There are undying leaders of the cult in the mountains of China [140]. When the stars come right again, the secret priests of the cult will take Cthulhu from His tomb to revive His subjects and resume His rule of Earth [141].

The most detailed account of the cult worship comes from Inspector Legrasse, who raided a ritual in a Louisiana swamp on November 1, 1907. Naked worshippers danced counterclockwise in a circle around a bonfire with a pillar surmounted by a small carving of Cthulhu [138]. The cultists erected ten scaffolds where they hung victims head down [138]; the victims were slain by Black Winged Ones from a haunted wood [140]. The ritual may also have been witnessed by a monstrous white bulk with shining eyes in the distance [138].

A Brief Resurgence

In the spring of 1925, there was a brief period of increased psychic influence on the part of Cthulhu or the Great Old Ones generally:

1. On the night of February 28 to March 1, 1925, an earthquake occurred in New England and the artist Henry Anthony Wilcox dreamed of Cthulhu [128]. Starting on February 28, artists and poets began having bizarre and frightening dreams [131]. Also on March 1 [or February 28 on the American side of the International Date Line], the schooner *Emma* was thrown off her course by a great "earthquake-born" storm in the South Pacific [146, 149]. It appears that this is the earthquake that threw a portion of the sunken city of

R'lyeh to the surface [150].

2. On March 23, the crew of the *Emma* landed on on previously unknown island [147], a portion of newly-risen R'lyeh. There, the hapless sailor Donovan seems to have been responsible for opening a great door that allowed Cthulhu to emerge [151]. After killing some of the sailors, Cthulhu swam after their ship until they reversed direction and used the ship to ram Him. This did not kill Cthulhu, however, for He started to recombine afterward [152-153]. Presumably as a result of Cthulhu's emergence from His lair, the psychic influence intensified on the night of March 22-23, when Wilcox lapsed into a delirium [130]. During the night of March 22-23, New York police were mobbed by hysterical Levantines [132]. During the period from March 23-April 2, even average people in society and business reported uneasy but formless nocturnal impressions [131].
3. The psychic influence abated on April 2 when another storm occurred in the South Pacific [146, 153] and the dreamer Wilcox in New England recovered from his delirium [130]. Poets, artists, and ordinary people stopped being troubled by the bizarre nocturnal visions [131]. These events presumably mark the sinking of R'lyeh back to the ocean depths, and Cthulhu's return to entrapment.

Among the events in this period, it is not at all clear why R'lyeh rose or sank again; whether through random geologic processes, or because the stars were nearly "right," or as a result of ritual activities on the part of the cultists. Also, given that R'lyeh sank again, it is not explained why Cthulhu went down with it, since he had already escaped from His lair and shown His ability to swim.

Alien Cults

Abdul Alhazred was a worshipper of both Cthulhu and Yog-Sothoth [[History](#) 51]. Alhazred wrote that Cthulhu is a cousin of those "Old Ones" associated with Yog-Sothoth, but can spy them only dimly [[Dunwich](#) 170]. The *Necronomicon* hints of the Cthulhu and Yog-Sothoth myth cycles, which antedate the coming of man to the earth Prehuman [[Whisperer](#) 219]. Cthulhu seeped down from the stars when the earth was still half-formed [[Mound](#)115].

There seems to be a strong alliance between Cthulhu and the Deep Ones. Thus, while discussing the beliefs of the Esoteric Order of Dagon at Innsmouth, Zadok Allen quoted the invocation to Cthulhu: *Ph'nglui mglw'nash* , etc.

[[Innsmouth](#) 337]. The [Innsmouth](#) narrator dreamed that the Deep Ones will someday rise again to give the tribute Cthulhu craves [367]. As he contemplated his change into a Deep One, the [Innsmouth](#) narrator wrote praises to Cthulhu and R'lyeh [367].

The Outer Ones were also linked to Cthulhu. Folklore researcher Henry Akeley wrote of Cthulhu in a letter to Wilmarth [[Whisperer](#) 223]. Cthulhu was among the entities praised during a May-Eve ritual in a Vermont cave, performed by an Outer

One and a human [226]. The being impersonating Henry Akeley said that the Outer Ones arrived on Earth long before the fabulous epoch of Cthulhu was over, and remember R'lyeh when it was above the waters [254]. This being also told Wilmarth from whence Cthulhu first came [256].

The Children of Tulu

The Old Ones of K'n-yan worshipped an octopoid being named Tulu; the *Mound* narrator identified this being with folklore of monstrous and unmentioned Cthulhu, who seeped down from the stars while the earth was still half-formed [*Mound*114]. Heaton referred to the Old Ones as the children of Tulu [101]. Capt. George Lawton babbled of Great Tulu after visiting K'n-yan [103]. Grey Eagle's protective talisman included a design of a kind of octopoid monster [109]. Charging Buffalo said that the Old Ones worshipped Yig and Tulu [119]. Inside the passageway leading to K'n-yan, Zamacona observed carvings of Yig and Tulu [120]. Zamacona stumbled on a temple with a statue of an octopus-headed abnormality [126-128]; the temples of Cthulhu were the most richly constructed objects in all K'n-yan [136]. These temples were surrounded by embowering groves [144]. Zamacona watched the subtle orgiastic rites at such temples with fascinated repulsion [144].

The Old Ones of K'n-yan traditionally believed that Tulu first brought them to this planet, along with the Tulu metal [127]. By Zamacona's time, the Old Ones were not sure of the historical truth of these legends, but still referenced Tulu for aesthetic reasons [131, 136]. Great Tulu was regarded as a spirit of universal harmony [136]. The Old Ones believed that the wrath of space-devils had lead to the submergence of the gods, including Tulu [131].

Zamacona's dreams of the abyss of N'kai shocked the leaders of Yig and Tulu worship [149]. Zamacona observed statues to Yig and Tulu in a tunnel leading up to the outer world [152]; later, the *Mound* narrator also viewed them [160, 162-163].